

Architectural Window Corporation

Teaming with New England Shorelines Co. for Superior Window Solutions

by Pamela Schweppe

There are some things that are at their best when you don't notice them. Take windows, for example. If they don't fit properly ... or the frames are rotting ... or one unit's windows don't match another's ... or the windows simply don't support the architectural style of the building, then the whole association suffers.

Fortunately for associations throughout New England and the Mid-Atlantic States, there's Architectural Window Corporation. Based in Manchester, Conn., Architectural Window Corporation has been helping associations solve their window problems for more than a decade.

The Right Look And the Right Fit

A full-service supplier of historic windows, shutters, exterior doors and storefronts, the company was founded by its president, Mike Morton, who began his

career in the window industry during the 1980s. He quickly discovered that, to him, the most interesting and challenging aspect of the business was replacing historical windows — that is, as he puts it, “replicating what already exists.”

That fascination came in handy when Kevin Wentworth of the Walsh Company, a full-service project management and development company, whose activities include developing condominium complexes from Boston to Philadelphia, called on Morton.

In Philadelphia, Wentworth needed specialty windows for a 200-year old complex in the historic Old City district that was being converted into condominiums.

“Dealing with buildings that old is challenging because the level of detail sometimes is there, and sometimes isn't,” he explains. “Old-time masons sometimes had a beer during the day, so the quality of their work could

depend on whether it was done before or after lunch.”

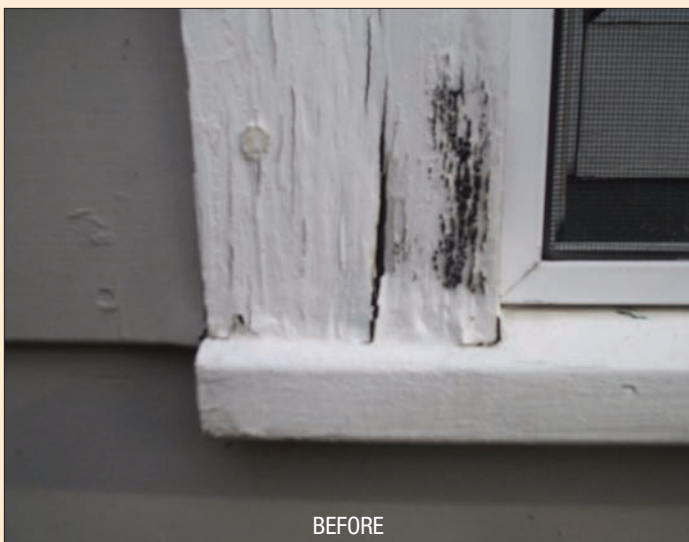
The important consideration in replacing the windows was not only getting them to fit in inconsistent spaces, but also maintaining the historic integrity of the building, while also enhancing energy efficiency with modern thermal panes.

“Mike was right on top of everything and made the details work,” Wentworth says. “He was responsive and creative.”

Historic Window Specialists For Modern Condominiums

Of course, most condominium complexes were built in the late 1970s and 80s, which means a large market now needs the kind of work in which Morton is an expert.

“It's a maintenance nightmare,” says Mike Fields, sales manager for New England Shorelines Co. of Pembroke, Mass.



BEFORE



AFTER

What a difference PVC makes! Architectural Window Corporation replaces rotting window frames with PVC-based Forever Frames from New England Shorelines, for a traditional look of wood that's maintenance-free.

New England Shorelines has been serving the New England area since 1969 and is an expert in capturing the colonial flavor of New England windows. So it's natural that Architectural Window Corporation often turns to New England Shorelines to provide the manufacturing for its condominium association clients, among others.

"We offer a cost-effective solution that preserves the original appearance of the building," Fields says. One reason why is that New England Shorelines' Forever Frame windows are crafted from PVC, preserving quality and appearance while also providing the benefit of low maintenance.

Fields explains that, during the 1980s and 90s, wood quality suffered. The pine that was being harvested was not as durable as the first-growth pine that was readily available a century ago, and window manufacturers were forced to use lower-quality primed finger-jointed (PFJ) wood.

"Those windows are showing signs of rot, mildew, warping and cracking in spite of regular scraping and re-painting," he says.

With typical replacement windows, Fields said, the original appearance of the wood window is lost. PVC, on the other hand, offers a low-maintenance, long-lasting frame that looks like wood to the naked eye. "We saw an opportunity to replicate the traditional appearance of wood windows — without the maintenance," he explains.

A Partnership Framed By a Concern for Quality

According to Morton, Architectural Window Corporation's window installations are so skillfully handled, the difference to existing windows is virtually unnoticeable. So associations can replace windows "piecemeal," as he describes it.

Fields notes, however, that, if one unit or building starts to have an issue with rotting windows, the problem is likely to spread throughout the entire complex, so it's important for the

problem to be addressed association-wide. "It's a good motivator to get it done," Morton says.

To make their case, Morton and Fields often make a presentation to the board of trustees to become pre-approved as an option on the association's vendor list. "We do an assessment of the current windows and make a recommendation," Morton says.

That recommendation can take one of three forms, according to Fields. If the frame is sound but the wood sash needs replacing, sash kits — a pair of sash and jamb liners — can be made to fit into the openings.

A second choice is to replace the wood frames. "Many replacement windows do nothing to solve the problem of rotting wood frames," Fields says. "Ask and they will tell you that they can repair those frames for an additional charge." Architectural Window Corporation, on the other hand, offers PVC Forever Frames that eliminate the problem of rotting forever.

The third option is to replace the entire window. "There's no 'one-size-fits-all' mentality," says Fields. "Our ability to size the window and casing to fit the existing dimension without disturbing the shingle or clapboard siding makes for an 'easy out, easy in' where an entire window unit is being used."

Fields adds that typical replacement windows are what he calls a "frame within a frame," fitting inside the original window and reducing glass size. "Our solutions preserve the original glass size and appearance, so the difference is virtually invisible, instead of hodgepodge," he says.

Design options are also flexible and encompass styles that include bay windows, picture windows, ovals and rounds, garage-door transoms and more. Casing profiles are pre-finished, so no painting is required. Casing can be repainted with oil-based or latex paints with no need for a primer coat.

One customer who relies on Architectural Window Corporation is Alex Mahegan of Keith Construction.

Keith Construction specializes in multi-family residential construction projects, many of which are occupied while the work is being done.

"We have to have every part up to the minute so there's minimal downtime," Mahegan says. "And sometimes we need to do a mock-up in a unit that's only vacant for a short time," so quick shipment is key. "We want to make sure it fits correctly before we install 500 windows," he says.

Architectural Window Corporation delivers, not only on turnaround, but also on quality, according to Mahegan.

"They do lots of rigorous testing," he says. "The customer has to pay for the first test, but if the window doesn't pass, the contractor has to pay until it does. These windows pass the first time, every time, with flying colors."

That level of quality is backed by a 20-year warranty against seal failure on the glass. Plus, Forever Frame's Low-E, Argon-filled sash has earned an excellent "U" factor for today's energy code.

Competitive Pricing + Energy Savings = Peace of Mind

Energy efficiency is a major benefit of Architectural Windows. "The insulating value is so much better, some of our customers have saved an entire tank of oil over the course of a winter," Fields says.

Morton points out that further savings can be realized through tax credits that may be available for the installation of energy-efficient windows. "Plus it's quieter," Fields says. "And there's no more scraping or painting!"

Ultimately, at the end of the project, it will appear as if Architectural Window Corporation was never there, according to Fields, who adds, "But all of the window problems are gone."

For more about how Architectural Window Corporation can improve the appearance and energy savings of your association, call (877) 286-1881, or visit www.arch-window.com.